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Bangalore Mirror

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TREE FOR ALL

Calls for holistic approach, clearer agency roles during BBMP's tree manual public consultation meeting

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METER IS RUNNING

Arrest of couple puts spotlight again on illicit lending practice that borders on extortion, pushes borrower into debt

PAGE 5

While cases of primary riders without helmets have come down in 2024 as compared to 2023, pillion riders throwing caution to the wind as number of those flouting rule shoots up

YOU AT THE BACK, MIND YOUR HEAD

Traffic officials say 'short-distance' comes up as excuse often

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While the number of violations for riding without a helmet has witnessed a significant drop in 2024, there is a rise in pillion riders failing to wear helmets, indicating a shift in traffic violations that authorities find concerning.

According to the latest data from the Traffic Police, cases of two-wheeler riders caught without helmets have declined from 40,15,729 in 2023 to 27,41,532 in 2024. However, the number of pillion riders flouting the helmet rule has surged from 13,70,218 in 2023 to 18,23,665 in 2024.

Traffic officials believe that stringent enforcement, hefty fines, and awareness campaigns may have contributed to the drop in primary riders without helmets. However, pillion riders seem to be disregarding their safety, which could prove fatal in case of an accident. Despite consistent awareness campaigns and strict enforcement of helmet rules, pillion riders continue to neglect this critical safety measure. But why is wearing a helmet still not a priority for them?

Traffic officials explained three major categories of individuals who frequently neglect wearing helmets. First, parents dropping their children at school often overlook helmet use, prioritising convenience over safety. Second, high school and college students tend to avoid helmets, citing reasons like discomfort

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

> **"It is a common practice for parents to purchase helmets only for the rider, often neglecting one for the child. Approximately 5% to 10% of fatalities involve riders without helmets**
> —Shiva Prakash Devaraju, DCP South Traffic

Statutory warning

5 years after it was set up, Maharani Cluster University still doesn't have any statutes and is yet to produce a single PhD

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Maharani Cluster University (MCU) is the first cluster university for women in South India. The university, established under Karnataka State Universities Amendment Act 2019, was expected to give an impetus to academics and research in the state. However, five years after it was established, the MCU has not produced a single Ph.D.

The shocking part is that the authorities are yet to come out with statutes as the file pertaining to the statutes has been pending with the higher-ups for reasons best known to only them. The more the delay in approving the statutes the more is the loss for the professors and students. Unless the professors are transferred to the MCU, they cannot invite applications from the students to pursue doctoral degrees in specific fields. As of now, the professors working at the MCU are from the Department of Collegiate Education. They have been working at Maharani's College for Women before it became the MCU in 2019.

There are around 120 professors qualified to produce Ph.Ds but they cannot do it till they are transferred to the MCU. As of now, they are drawing salaries from the Department of Collegiate Education. "We have been drawing salary from the Department of Collegiate Education but

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Urdu night

Experience the magic of Arabian Nights through the art of Dastangoi, as storyteller Kafeel Jafri brings these timeless tales to life with a blend of narration and poetry. **Where: Sasken Multimedia Gallery; When: February 12, 6.30 pm–7.45 pm**

02 Romantic night

Celebrate love with the best 90s and 2000s love songs, live DJs, and a romantic vibe at Watson's. Enjoy great food, and refreshing drinks, and take home a Polaroid memory with your loved ones. **Where: Watson's Indiranagar; When: February 14, 8.00 pm**

03 Poetic healing

Join an evening of poetry and conversation at a special event by the Non-Aligned Poets, dedicated to raising awareness about suicide and mental health. Through poetry and shared stories, the event aims to foster healing, understanding, and meaningful dialogue. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: February 16, 6.00 pm**

04 Innovative mind

Experience the most eventful fest with 2,000 more students, featuring art, photography, digital media, and sculpture to spark innovation and curiosity. **Where: Bangalore International Centre, Domlur; When: February 12-13, 10.30 am – 4.00 pm**

05 Cartoon exhibition

Explore the artistic brilliance of renowned Cuban cartoonist Angel Boligan at a special exhibition showcasing his best works. **Where: Indian Cartoon Gallery; When: February 17 – March 1**

06 Pulse of techno

Celebrate Bangalore's underground techno scene with Oddvision's first-anniversary takeover at Indiranagar SOCIAL. Featuring an electrifying lineup of international and local DJs. **Where: Indiranagar SOCIAL; When: February 16, 9.00 pm**

B'luru engages in tree manual talks, but all not thrashed out

BBMP's public consultation on city's green cover drew mixed reactions, with calls for a holistic approach and clearer agency roles; some questioned rushed process

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The importance of adopting a holistic approach to tree plantation and management, the need to define the roles of other agencies responsible for maintaining the city's green cover, and the significance of roadside plantation in urban forestry were some of the suggestions provided by citizens at a public consultation meeting held by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) on Tuesday.

The civic body held the session at the Institute of Wood Science and Technology to discuss and receive suggestions on a set of manuals developed by BBMP for the management and plantation of trees in the city - The Bengaluru Urban Tree Management Manual 2024 and Tree Planting Manual 2024.

The session received mixed reactions as some citizens criticised the way the consultation was conducted. Others termed the preparation of the manuals as a laudable initiative.

"The manuals will improve tree plantation and maintenance efforts in the city," said Dattatreya Devare, Trustee of Bangalore Environment Trust, and advocated a holistic approach to ensure better results in urban forestry.

Notably, tree plantation in Bengaluru is taken up under various programs by the central and state governments, such as the National Clean Air program, Karnataka Heat Wave Action Plan, and Bangalore Climate Action and Resilience Plan (BCAP).

Citizens urged the manual to include other agencies' roles in green cover management

Citizens also highlighted that the manuals should include the role of other agencies in plantation and green cover management. "Urban forestry has many stakeholders apart from BBMP's forest department such as BMRCL (Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited), K-RIDE, etc, which carry out compensatory plantation at large scale. The role of these agencies should be clearly defined in the manuals. The Project and Road Infrastructure Departments of BBMP also have an important role to play in the development of urban forestry. Moreover, although BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) and BDA (Bangalore Development Authority) have been doing compensatory plantations, the survival of the saplings is the key. This issue should be addressed in detail in the manuals," added Devare.

However, some citizens termed the session eyewash. According to Alexander James, a senior citizen and city-based green cover proponent, the draft manuals were handed over to participants during the session, with no time to go through the documents. "We were briefed on the content of the manual during the session, rendering it useless for participants. BBMP should have shared the manuals beforehand for citizens to go through it and then come up with suggestions," said James.

> **"BBMP should have shared the manuals beforehand for citizens to go through it and then come up with suggestions**– Alexander J, green cover proponent

Some city-based tree activists say although they wanted to attend the consultation meeting, they could not attend as it was held on a weekday.

"The consultation should have been organised over weekends. I wanted to attend it, but I could not due to a prior engagement," said Vinod Jacob from Namma Bengaluru Foundation.

No need to visit campus, BU degree certificates go online

Service will launch soon, making academic documents more easily accessible, especially for students with urgent needs

Students graduating from Bangalore University will no longer need to visit the campus to obtain their degree certificates. The university has introduced an online system that will allow students to receive their Original Transcript (OT) and Provisional Degree Certificate (PDC) directly through the internet.

A university official said, "Every year, thousands of students apply for their OT and PDC, and with the increasing demand for these documents, we have decided to implement an online system to provide them more efficiently. A dedicated software is being developed to facilitate this, and once it is finalised, students will be able to apply online, pay the necessary fees, and receive their certificates via email within a few days."

Before the trifurcation of BU, around 3.5 lakh students from 700 colleges registered every semester. However, after the division, the number of affiliated colleges has reduced to 245, and student enrolment has also declined. Currently, many students are still waiting for their convocation certificates. Until they receive their degree certificates, they will be able to apply for the PDC, which will be valid for six months and will help them secure employment or pursue higher education.

Registrar (Evaluation) C Srinivas added the importance of the OT, especially for students planning to study abroad. "The OT is a crucial document as it includes the student's complete academic record, including the duration of their studies and grades. Earlier, obtaining the OT and PDC required students to visit the university and wait several months for processing. With the new online system, they can avoid delays and the challenges that came with manual submissions and status checks," he said.

The service is expected to be launched soon, making it easier for students, especially those with urgent requirements, to access their academic documents.

— BMB

Long arm of law finally reaches man accused of murder 14 years ago

Police quiz parents, track agency linked to his family's Aadhaar card to track him down

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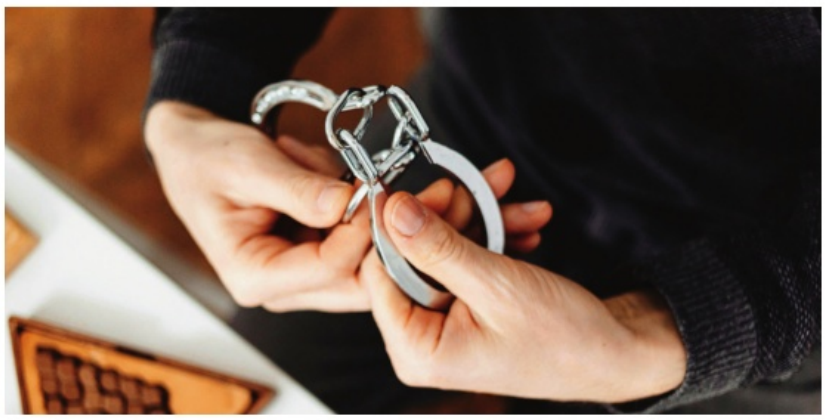

In a determined crackdown on fugitives, officials have been instructed to launch a special drive to trace those who have escaped after committing crimes. The RT Nagar police nabbed a 34-year-old waiter, who had been on the run after murdering his friend nearly 14 years ago, from Vyalikaval last week. Their breakthrough came through a combination of technical evidence and information provided by a rowdy-sheeter, bringing them one step closer to nabbing the absconding accused.

DCP (North) Saidulu Adawat stated, "Conducting such investigations on absconding individuals is a standard procedure and it's actually a regular part of investigation. We are now intensifying our efforts as part of a dedicated drive to track down absconding individuals. The Bangalore City Police has launched this initiative across all divisions, ensuring a more rigorous and systematic approach to apprehending those evading the law."

In 2011, the accused John and three others had stabbed 20-year-old Chetan to death at Kempegowda Colony in RT Nagar. Based on a complaint lodged by Chetan's father, the police had arrested three accused, except John, and filed a chargesheet. But John had been absconding since the day Chetan was murdered.

Decade of disguise

For 14 years, John adopted a low-profile life, taking up odd jobs as a waiter in Tirupati, Hoskote, Mysuru, and Andhra Pradesh. To avoid detection, he refrained from using a mobile phone for over 13 years and never stayed in one place for too long. The police had issued nearly 20 warrants against him, but each time, he managed to slip away.

A police official stated, " A breakthrough occurred a month ago when we arrested Chaati Raja, who had come out on bail, had escaped, and evaded his warrant. During the investigation, we discovered that another accused was still on the run, so we pursued the lead. With no immediate clues, we decided to track his whereabouts through his parents."

While questioning them, new leads on John's location emerged. Officials learned that his parents lived in Vyalikaval. Though they denied knowing his whereabouts, the police turned to an unconventional method—tracing Aadhaar linkages.

While investigating John's parents, they did not provide any information but police discovered that an Aadhaar card linked to them was registered at a gas agency. Through this agency, officers tracked contact details and monitored movements. This crucial clue led them to Andhra Pradesh, where they learned that John had returned to Bengaluru a year ago.

Bloody tale of revenge

John, Chetan, Raja, Arun, and Manikanta were once friends, but a rift changed everything. An old altercation had led to Chetan attacking Raja, for which he was briefly jailed. After his release, Raja sought revenge and enlisted the help of John and the others. On the fateful day, an argument escalated into violence. Chetan, in a fit of rage, attacked John with a beer bottle. In retaliation, John fatally stabbed Chetan with a knife.

Now, after years of dodging the law, John has been remanded to police custody. His arrest marks a victory for the RT Nagar police. Police officials stated that he was kept in custody for the past three days and on Tuesday, officials produced the accused to court.

Fake RBI documents scam cracked open

A web of deception unraveled when a businessman, desperate for financial aid, fell for the words of fraudsters, who lured him with promises of accessing money stuck in the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Using forged documents, the scammers, who were known to the victim, allegedly cheated him out of Rs 37.5 lakh by claiming they could help him retrieve a staggering Rs 15 lakh crore.

The case came to light when the owner of a company in Seshadripuram lodged a complaint with the Central Crime Branch (CCB) (East) on November 22.

The businessman, struggling with financial losses, was approached by two known individuals who promised to him they could arrange financial assistance. They introduced him to a group claiming they had access to Rs 15 lakh crore from a foreign company, supposedly stuck in the RBI due to pending taxes.

The two persons known to him introduced him to a group of women entrepreneurs based in Nagarabhavi. One of the accused, who had previously sold antique copper bowls to the complainant, allegedly claimed to have received Rs 15 lakh crore from a foreign company.

Trusting these assertions, the victim agreed to cooperate and even travelled to Delhi to assist in clearing the so-called RBI file. Over time, he was deceived into transferring Rs 37.5 lakh through cash and bank transactions. Realising he had been duped, he reported the matter to the authorities, prompting a CCB investigation.

The crackdown began on December 6, when the first suspect was apprehended in Basaveshwara Nagar.

During interrogation, he confessed to his involvement in the scam. On December 11, a second accused was arrested in Hubballi, leading investigators to recover Rs 1 lakh in cash. He further disclosed that five more individuals were part of the racket.

On February 7, three more suspects were tracked down, with officials seizing two counterfeit RBI files. The final arrest was made on February 8, of the individual responsible for fabricating the fake RBI file. Two cars, five mobile phones, two forged RBI files, and Rs 1 lakh in cash were seized. The arrested are identified as Hidayatullah, Prateek, Umesh, Sukirti, and Zakir, while, Yuvanika and Bindu, remain absconding. **BMB**

Man stabbed to death by brother-in-law

A man, who used to sell artificial jewellery on the roadside, was stabbed to death by his brother-in-law, at the City Railway Station premises on Tuesday.

The deceased have been identified as Venkatesh and the accused is his brother-in-law identified as Ramu. Accord ing to the police Ramu allegedly stabbed Venkatesh and fled the scene after a minor argument while the both were drinking at the station's parking lot on Sunday.

The victim received first aid and was later hospitalised, where he briefly spoke to his family before succumbing to internal injuries. The murder came to light when a relative tried to contact him and found out about his death. The railway police have registered a case and launched a search for the accused. **BMB**

Appeal in SC planned in actress Sanjana Galrani's case

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The investigations of the 2020 Sandalwood drug case, involving actress Sanjana Galrani have taken a new turn, with authorities deciding to file a Special Leave Petition (SLP) before the Supreme Court.

In a recent meeting held by the committee handling the case against the actress, it was decided that the case deserves a special appeal in the Supreme Court. The matter is also said to have been discussed with Home Minister Dr G Parameshwar.

In a weekly press meet on Tuesday, Police Commissioner B Dayananda confirmed that the Central Crime Branch is planning to approach the Supreme Court after the Karnataka High Court dismissed the case against the actress. Officials have reportedly sought permission from the Home Department to proceed with the appeal and are expected to receive approval soon.

According to a statement by Galrani, the actress admitted to being in contact with Pratheek Shetty, who allegedly supplied drugs for both self-consumption and distribution at parties. A search led to the recovery of 11.5 grams of ecstasy, a commercial quantity, from Shetty's residence. Additionally, Galrani reportedly tested positive for cocaine and MDMA in a second hair analysis conducted by Central Forensic Science Library in Hyderabad on December 5, 2020.

Investigators have linked Galrani and other accused individuals to the organisation of drug-fueled parties, where illegal substances were sold. The case has raised legal debates over the registration of multiple FIRs for similar offences committed in different years (2015, 2018, 2019, and 2020).

As per Section 219 of CrPC, three types of offences committed within one year can be charged together. Following a review meeting, officials concluded that Galrani's case involves serious charges, including drug procurement, consumption, and facilitation. The High Court held that the various legal questions raised by the government counsel in the case would be decided in a special appeal. Therefore, it was decided that this is a suitable case for filing an SLP in the Supreme Court.

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SUMMER VACATION-2025
(Eng & Kan Med) Admissions Started for
IV&V
Sainik/Navodaya/Kittur/RMS Coaching
Maths, English, Intelligence (IQ) & GK
VI to X
(Mathematics, Science & English Grammar)
Classes Start from : 02.04.2025

Basavaraj Koulagi
Founder Chairman
2023-24 Result
Sainik Schools - 435
Karnataka - 167
Others States - 268
Navodaya Schools - 102
SSLC
Above 95%
(143 Students)
Separate Hostel Facility Available For Boys & Girls

Up in smoke: Who will stop the garbage fires?

Despite complaints, garbage burning chokes Bellahalli as residents demand action; BBMP marshals and fire officials intervened, but fires persist on private land

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Despite complaints, the menace of garbage burning continues to haunt the residents of Bellahalli and surrounding areas. It has become a nuisance and an eyesore for residents of nearby apartments. The residents were alarmed to see thick smoke billowing from the burning of garbage on a nearby private land.

It is alleged that some ragpickers set garbage on fire at night, and the burning continues till morning. The residents said that they have complained to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) authorities and police but the burning of garbage continues.

Kannur Apartments Federation wrote a letter to the Additional Commissioner of Police, Sampigehalli Sub-Division on November 9, 2024, against the land owner and people responsible for the burning of garbage but the burning of garbage is continuing without any hassles. Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited wrote a letter to the Bengaluru Police Inspector on November 7, 2024, to take suitable action against the landowners who threatened BBMP Marshals for objecting to the burning of garbage.

Bangalore Mirror published a story, "Smoking citizens out is injurious to health" on November 2, 2024, narrating how the residents have been suffering due to the burning of garbage. The residents urge the authorities concerned to ensure no burning of garbage on private land. They want the police to keep a vigil on those setting garbage on fire.

Residents of Bellahalli and surrounding areas have even approached the cops about garbage burning issue in their area

"There are multiple private waste management units near Bellahalli where they actively burn all types of waste, every morning Bellahali and Kannur nearby are filled with smoke with fumes. Despite multiple complaints to authorities, they are unable to stop this from happening. Even during the Bangalore flagship Aero India show the burning has been happening which is not even 5-km of radius," said Vijeth Shetty, a resident.

Expressing a similar opinion, Raghunandan JP, a resident, said the burning of garbage has become a nuisance for the residents. "There

> **"There are multiple private waste management units near Bellahalli where they burn all types of waste, every morning**
> – Vijeth Shetty, resident of the area

are some rag pickers using private land to segregate garbage. They are setting mixed waste on fire thus polluting the environment. I think that rag pickers are not locals. I want the authorities concerned to fix this problem for the benefit of people residing at Bellahalli and surrounding areas," said Raghunandan.

The residents said that they informed the Fire and Emergency Services Department about the burning of garbage. They said the BBMP Marshals and Fire and Emergency Services personnel doused the fire. "I have visited the spot. The land does not come under the BBMP's jurisdiction. It is private land," said the BBMP Chief Marshal.

File related to statutes goes to and fro the corridors of power

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

working for the MCU. Though we have been working with the MCU for five years, we have to report to the Department of Collegiate Education," said an assistant professor on the condition of anonymity.

The infrastructure of the MCU is developed through the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) scheme of the Minister of Human Resources and Development. "We are expected to focus on research and guide students who want to do Ph.D but we are not authorised even though we are working with the MCU. The very purpose of establishing the MCU is defeated and the objective of the RUSA scheme is not served," said a professor.

The procedure of getting approval for statutes has begun in September 2022 but it is still pending with the authorities concerned. The sources privy to the process have said the file related to the statutes, after it got the green signal from administration and finance departments, was sent to the Governor for approval in September 2023 but it was sent back for clarification in April 2024. The MCU sent the file again to the Principal Secretary of the Higher Education Department with the clarifications. The sources said the file reached the Governor Office on January 6, 2025.

As per the norms, professors or lecturers recruited by the Department of Collegiate Education have to retire at 60 years while the retirement age is 62 for university professors. "I was compelled to get a stay from the High Court. I have been working as a professor without salary. The authorities issued a retirement order to me though I am eligible to retire at 62 years as I have been working at the MCU. More than six retired professors have approached the court seeking justice," said a professor.

HC seeks e-summons update

The Karnataka High Court has instructed the state administration to provide an update by February 25 regarding the proposed rule modifications for enabling email-based notices and summons delivery in Bangalore's Commercial courts. During the hearing of Advocate Anirudh Suresh's petition, Justice R Devdas stated, "The State government should be informed that there is an urgent need to approve the rules for service of notice through email."

The court was informed by Suresh about the High Court Registrar General's submission of rule amendments on March 15, 2024. He stated, "Thereafter, several directions were given by this court to secure instruction regarding the status of the approval of rules, about service of notices or summons through email. But till now, the state government has not come back to this court, nor have the rules been approved by the Governor."

He additionally noted that other jurisdictions, including Delhi and Bombay, have already implemented rules permitting email-based summons delivery. The court subsequently ordered, "Relist the matter on February 25. A copy of the order is served on Additional Government Advocate who shall secure instructions in writing as to the status of the recommendation made by this court for amendment of rules." — BMB

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Traffic violations

Palace Ground Road

Is tinted glass still banned? On Palace Cross Road, outside the Kia showroom, its use raises questions about enforcement.

Civic responsibility

Guttahall

Those responsible for defacing walls with posters should be fined and made to clean them up. This is a common sight from Cantonment Railway Station to Palace Guttahalli.

Public safety

Hulimavu

With masked thieves in Hulimavu, how can the public possibly identify them?

Ganja, MDMA, opium in city police's drug haul

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Bengaluru police intensified their crackdown on the narcotics trade, leading to the arrest of multiple individuals involved in selling banned substances across the city. Over the past month, significant quantities of ganja, MDMA crystals, and opium have been seized, throwing light on a growing supply chain that spans across states and even international networks.

Foreigner arrested in Hennur

In one of the most notable cases, the Hennur police, acting on a tip-off, raided a location in Chelekere Grounds and arrested a foreign national for selling prohibited drugs. Upon interrogation, the accused admitted to procuring ganja and MDMA crystals from another foreigner near MG Road at lower rates and reselling them at high prices. The raid resulted in the seizure of 3 kg ganja and 55 gm MDMA along with a two-wheeler, amounting to a total value of Rs 6.5 lakh. The accused has been remanded to judicial custody.

Suppliers traced back from Kerala

In a separate case, the police teams from Kalasipalya and Kamakshipalya police arrested multiple suspects selling ganja. The Kalasipalya police apprehended two persons near the Kalasipalya bus stand and seized 6 kg of ganja worth Rs 3 lakh that was traced back to suppliers from Kerala. Meanwhile, Kamakshipalya police caught a manselling 7.2 kg of ganja, sourced from Odisha, worth Rs 2.8 lakh.

Opium-related case

Kamakshipalya police also made a significant breakthrough in an opium-related case. Acting on a lead, they arrested a suspect near the Sarada Colony bus stand and seized 2 kg of opium, a digital scale, and a two-wheeler. The total value of the seizure was Rs 3 lakh. The accused revealed that he had procured the opium from Rajasthan and was selling it in Bengaluru for profit.

In addition to these major operations, Suddagunte police arrested two persons in separate incidents related to ganja trafficking of 1.8 kg, a mobile phone, and a two-wheeler were seized in Bhawani Nagar, valued at Rs 1.15 lakh.

Further investigations led to another arrest in Gurappanapalya, where the suspect admitted to his involvement.

'Meter interest' not in anybody's interest

Couple harassing borrowers by charging exorbitant interest rates arrested in latest crackdown on illicit lenders

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What is meter baddi:
An unregulated system where interest compounds exponentially
Who do victims approach:
Registrar of Cooperative Societies—the authority responsible for regulating financial institutions
%

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) police have booked a couple for operating an illegal money lending business charging exorbitant interest rates. This case is just one in a series of unlicensed microfinance operations in the city.

Hundreds of such illegal moneylenders' function without proper licencing, exploiting vulnerable borrowers through predatory practices. The state's recent crackdown on unauthorised microfinance operators has brought increased scrutiny to "meter baddi" schemes, an unregulated system where interest compounds exponentially. As awareness of financial harassment grows, more victims are stepping forward, shedding light on the need for stricter enforcement and regulation in the microfinance sector.

The case

The couple, identified as Shashidra and her husband Ashok MS, allegedly extorted lakhs of rupees from borrowers using coercive methods. Their illegal operations came to light after Samreen Taj, 25, a resident of Siddapura, approached the authorities. Taj had borrowed Rs 1.6 lakh for her sister's wedding in July 2021 but ended up paying a staggering Rs 3.8 lakh in interest alone by May 2024. When she could no longer afford the payments and requested that the principal be settled, the accused allegedly threatened her and even filed a cheque bounce case, fraudulently inflating the amount to Rs 4 lakh using a post-dated cheque she had provided as surety.

Taj sought help from the Deputy Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Gangadhar, who subsequently lodged a complaint with the CCB. Following this, the police booked the couple under the Karnataka Money Lenders Act, the Karnataka Prohibition of Charging Exorbitant Interest Act, and Sections 504 (intentional insult to provoke breach of peace) and 420 (cheating) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Unregulated lending

Many borrowers find themselves caught in a relentless cycle of debt, forced to pay exorbitant interest rates with little hope of financial relief. Authorities suspect a vast network of unauthorised lenders operating across Bengaluru and rest of Karnataka, preying on individuals who struggle to obtain loans from banks or formal financial institutions.

> **People need to be aware that such businesses cannot operate without a valid licence**
>
> – Police official

With rising awareness, several victims are now turning to the Registrar of Cooperative Societies—the licencing authority responsible for regulating financial institutions. This body ensures compliance with RBI-mandated interest rates, monitors licencing conditions, and oversees renewals. However, a significant number of illegal financial entities, including unregistered moneylenders, small-scale finance businesses, and "meter baddi" operators, continue to function outside the legal framework.

Legal action

Law enforcement officials have stated that action will be taken against those engaged in illegal lending. "People need to be aware that such businesses cannot operate without a valid licence. Borrowers should verify the legitimacy of lenders before taking loans and we are committed to cracking down on financial exploitation," a police official stated. With the government tightening its grip on illegal money lending and more victims stepping forward, this case could mark the beginning of a broader campaign to eliminate exploitative lending practices. Authorities urge victims of such financial harassment to report cases immediately, ensuring that illegal moneylenders are brought to justice.

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City airport introduces system to track, manage flights

In a first for Indian airports, Kempegowda International Airport has introduced an Aerial View Display (AVD) System. This is a comprehensive real-time monitoring with a centralised dashboard and advanced flight data tracking that offers seamless tracking of all airside activities

A KIA official said, "This helps in overall efficiency of airport operations and emergency responses on the airside. This system offers real-time, consolidated monitoring of all airside operations from the Airport Operations Control Centre (AOCC), from flight movements to the coordination of emergency and ground vehicles, all on a single, centralised dashboard.

The AVD System is designed to enhance operational efficiency and safety by providing airport operators and stakeholders with a unified view of critical airside activities, including flight landings, take-offs, taxiing, and vehicle movements. By identifying flights through their flight numbers rather than traditional ATC call signs, the system simplifies tracking and management, empowering airport to streamline operations and make more collaborative and informed, real-time decisions with unparalleled situational awareness."

BIAL officials said that this will be a single platform providing real-time visibility into airside operations, including flight landings, take-offs, taxiing, and vehicle movements. This will also help in accurate monitoring of taxiing, aircraft speed, and runway occupancy time (ROT) to boost airside efficiency. "Real-time tracking of ground vehicles for seamless coordination and enhanced safety is also possible along with tracking collaborative decision-making. This will also enable better coordination during emergencies ensuring swift responses to minimise risks and disruptions," an official said.

The system will also help in in-depth analysis to reduce delays and ensure smooth operational flow which results in better On-time Performance (OTP) and energy savings. Satyaki Raghunath, Chief Operating Officer of BIAL, said, "This innovation will not only streamline operations but also empower stakeholders of BLR Airport to make faster, data-driven decisions that will improve capacity and efficiency across our airside operations, which in turn will lead to a reduction in emissions and enhanced sustainability standards."

—BMB

Karnataka to witness all-time high power demand this summer

Farmers increased use of pump sets is set to drive up consumption; state mandates seven hours of daily power supply, leading to 40% rise in agricultural demand

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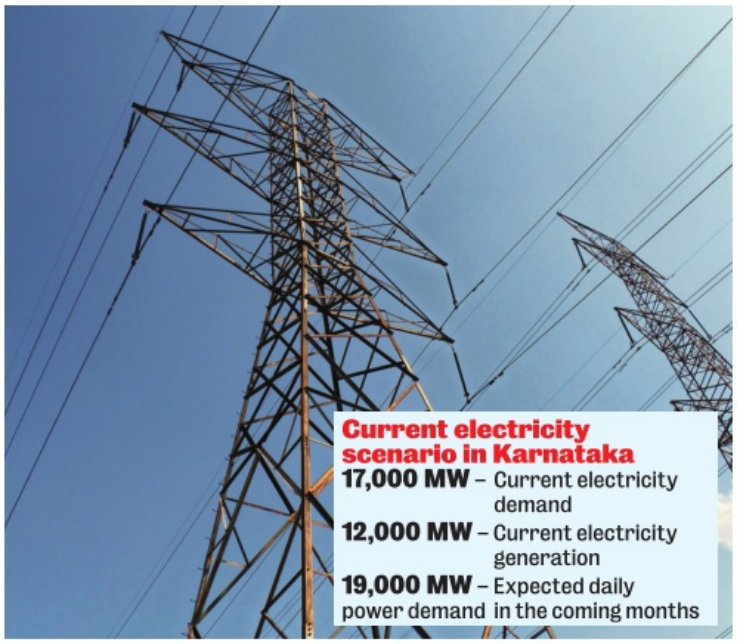
Even before the onset of summer, electricity consumption in Karnataka has witnessed a significant surge. Projections indicate that power demand could reach an all-time high in the next three to four months. The state's Energy Department has estimated that daily electricity demand could exceed 19,000 megawatts (MW) this summer, raising concerns about potential power shortages.

Power crisis looms

Sources say that last year, Karnataka experienced a power crisis even before summer. This can be attributed to insufficient rainfall in 2023, which led to low water levels in reservoirs and a resultant decline in hydropower generation. As a result, unscheduled load shedding was implemented in some parts of the state during January 2024. However, this year, good rainfall during the monsoon and winter seasons has replenished reservoirs, improving the hydropower generation outlook.

According to the Energy Department, the state's current electricity demand stands at 17,000 MW, while power generation from hydropower, wind energy, thermal power, and solar sources amounts to 12,000 MW. Additionally, Karnataka receives 3,521 MW from Central Power Generating Stations (CGS) and 1,002 MW from the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP).


Current electricity scenario in Karnataka
17,000 MW – Current electricity demand
12,000 MW – Current electricity generation
19,000 MW – Expected daily power demand in the coming months

This year's abundant monsoon and winter rainfall has refilled reservoirs, boosting hydropower generation prospects

Constant increase

A Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL) official said, "The electricity demand has been steadily increasing over the years, with the average summer demand recorded at 14,766 MW in 2022. This figure rose to 15,100 MW in 2023, and in 2024, it has already reached 17,000 MW, with projections indicating that it may touch 19,000 MW, setting a new record." He said that unlike previous years, where household and industrial consumption were the primary drivers of power demand, this year's surge is largely attributed to the increased use of agricultural pump sets.

"Electricity demand has been steadily increasing over the years, with the average summer demand recorded at 14,766 MW in 2022 – Official

Due to good amounts of rainfall in 2024, the cultivated area has expanded to nearly 104 lakh hectares, leading to greater reliance on irrigation. Farmers are expected to use more pump sets, significantly boosting electricity consumption. To meet this demand, the state government has mandated seven hours of daily power supply for agricultural pump sets, with four hours during the day and three hours at night. As a result, agriculture-related electricity consumption is expected to increase by 40%.

'Gruha Jyoti' impact

Officials also attribute the increased electricity demand to the 'Gruha Jyoti' scheme, which provides free electricity to domestic consumers. The scheme is widely said to have led to excessive usage, with power consumption tripling or even quadrupling in some cases. With summer approaching, electricity usage is expected to significantly rise further, putting additional pressure on the power grid.

Unexplained surge in Lichen Planus, stress, weak immunity may be causes

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Health professionals have been noticing a rise in cases of Lichen Planus, a chronic inflammatory skin condition that can affect the mouth, nails, and genitalia. This increase has been particularly evident after the Covid pandemic. Although the precise reason is unknown, potential causes include immunological or allergic reactions, exposure to specific medications, dyes, and other chemicals, as well as illnesses like Hepatitis C.

Dr Sunil Kumar Prabhu, Consultant – Dermatology at Aster RV Hospital, stated, "There has been an increased incidence of certain autoimmune disorders post-Covid-19, and Lichen Planus can be considered one such immunological condition. It tends to have a slightly higher prevalence in the years following Covid, a trend substantiated by certain academic and scientific journals. While the exact mechanism remains unknown, it is believed that an immunological trigger could be contributing to the rise in cases."

Lichen Planus typically presents with lacy-white lesions in the mouth, which can be painful or cause a burning sensation. Affected areas may also show thin white lines over the rash. On the skin or genitals, it manifests as purplish-coloured bumps or flat-topped lesions that develop and spread gradually over several weeks or months. These rashes are often accompanied by itching, particularly on the wrists, lower back, and ankles, making the condition both uncomfortable and persistent.

A 40-year-old female patient shared, "I was diagnosed with Lichen Planus in early March 2023. It started with harmless itching on my neck and face, accompanied by acute dryness. A few months later, dark hyperpigmented patches began to appear on my neck and then on my face. Overnight, the patches spread unevenly. I consulted a dermatologist who confirmed it was Lichen Planus. The causes of the condition are unknown, but I was told it could be due to stress, hormonal changes, or allergies to certain products. Every doctor I consulted mentioned seeing a significant spike in this condition post-Covid."

This rise, notable post-Covid, may stem from immune reactions, allergies, medications, chemicals or illnesses

Dr Deepa Krishnamurthy, Consultant Dermatologist at Manipal Hospital, Sarjapur Road, said, "There has been an increasing number of patients with Lichen Planus post-Covid, likely due to an autoimmune response triggered by the Covid infection and vaccination. It affects approximately 1-2% of the global population. A specific type of Lichen Planus, called actinic Lichen Planus, can flare up during the summer due to sun exposure, and it predominantly affects individuals in the 30-60 years age group."

Speaking on preventive measures, Dr Prabhu said, "Lichen Planus cannot be prevented, but once it develops, certain steps can help prevent its progression. Using cool compresses instead of scratching, reducing stress, quitting smoking, abstaining from alcohol, practising proper oral hygiene, and avoiding foods that irritate your mouth if you have oral Lichen Planus are all helpful. If left untreated, chronic inflammation caused by Lichen Planus can lead to chronic itching, discomfort, painful sores, scarring—especially in the mouth and genital areas—and, in severe cases, an increased risk of oral cancer. Depending on the severity, Lichen Planus can significantly impact the quality of life due to pain and difficulties in eating or engaging in sexual activity."

Kerala can't deny nurse registration

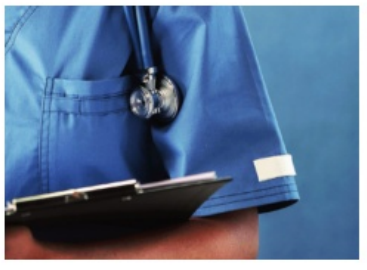
Karnataka High Court has ruled that the Kerala State or State Nursing Council cannot refuse registration to Karnataka BSc Nursing graduates solely because they studied outside Kerala. Justice Suraj Govindaraj, whilst hearing a petition from two Kerala natives who completed their nursing studies in Karnataka, determined that their registration cannot be denied due to lack of Indian Nursing Council certification.

The court stated, "Once a citizen of India is qualified and has been conferred a degree, that degree would be valid across the country, which has to be recognised by every institution." The ruling mandated the Kerala Nurses and Midwives Council to register the petitioners, Daniya Joy and Neethu Baby, along with other nursing graduates, enabling them to practise in Kerala. The court clarified that the Kerala State Council cannot demand Indian Nursing Council recognition or verification of college suitability, nor require prior registration with another state council for Kerala registration.

The petitioners had sought registration with the Kerala Nurses and Midwives Council, which demanded INC registration and institutional affiliation documentation from their nursing school. The Kerala Council contested the jurisdiction, arguing that since the petitioners resided in Kerala and sought relief against the Kerala Nursing Council, the Karnataka court lacked authority. The Council cited Section 21 of the Kerala Nurses and Midwives Act, 1953, emphasising mandatory registration for nursing practice in Kerala. They also referenced Section 13 of the Indian Nursing Council Act 1947 regarding suitability certificates.

Court ruled that Kerala State Council cannot require INC recognition, college verification or prior state registration

The court dismissed the jurisdiction challenge, stating that since the petitioners received degrees from a Karnataka university, it held jurisdiction. Court emphasised that citizens cannot be barred from practising their profession in any state merely because their degree originated elsewhere. The court concluded that inter-state nursing council reciprocity arrangements were unnecessary, as degrees recognised in one state must be accepted nationwide. The petition was subsequently allowed. — BMB



HEALTH TIP: Write down your reasons to exercise and revisit them whenever you feel tempted to skip a workout

Exercise doesn't have to mean gruelling sessions at the gym. Discover activities that you genuinely enjoy

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DECLUTTERING CAN BE STRESSFUL...

Clinical psychologist explains how personal values can make it easier

I recently helped my mom sort through boxes she inherited when my grandparents passed away. One box was labeled – either ironically or genuinely – "toothpick holders and other treasures." Inside were many keepsakes from moments now lost to history – although we found no toothpick holders.

My favorite of the items we sorted through was a solitary puzzle piece, an artifact reflecting my late grandmother's penchant for hiding the final piece to a jigsaw puzzle just to swoop in at the last moment and finish it.

After several hours of reminiscing, my mom and I threw away 90% of what we had sorted.

"Why did I keep this?" is a question I hear frequently, both from my family and friends and from patients. I am a licensed clinical psychologist whose research focuses on the characterisation, assessment and treatment of hoarding disorder, particularly for adults 60 years of age or older. As such, I spend a great deal of my time thinking about this question.

What drives the need to keep stuff?

Hoarding disorder is a psychiatric condition defined by urges to save items and difficulty discarding current possessions. For adults with "clinically severe" hoarding disorder, this leads to a level of household clutter that impairs daily functioning and can even create a fire hazard. In my professional experience, however, many adults struggle with clutter even if they do not meet the clinical criteria for hoarding disorder.

Holding on to things that have sentimental value or could be useful in the future is a natural part of growing older. For some people, though, this tendency to hold on to objects grows over time, to the point that they eventually do meet criteria for hoarding disorder. Age-related changes in executive function may help explain the increase in prevalence of hoarding disorder as we get older; increasing difficulty with decision-making in general also affects decisions around household clutter.

The traditional model behind hoarding disorder suggests that difficulty with discarding comes from distress during decision-making. However, my research shows that this may be less true of older adults.

When I was a graduate student, I conducted a study in which we asked adults with hoarding disorder to spend 15 minutes making decisions about whether to keep or discard various items brought from their home. Participants could sort whatever items they wanted. Most chose to sort paper items such as old mail, cards or notes.

We found that age was associated with lower levels of distress during the task, such that participants who were older tended to feel less stressed when making the decision about what to keep and what to discard. We also found that many participants, particularly those who were older, actually reported positive emotions while sorting their items.

In new research publishing soon, my current team replicated this finding using a home-based version of the task. This suggests that fear of making the wrong decision isn't a universal driver of our urge to save items.

In fact, a study my team published in August 2024 with adults over 50 with hoarding disorder suggests that altruism, a personality trait of wanting to help others, may explain why some people keep items that others might discard. My colleagues and I compared our participants' personality profiles with that of adults in the general population of the same gender and age group. Compared with the general population, participants with hoarding disorder scored almost universally high on altruism.

Altruism also comes up frequently in my clinical work with older adults who struggle with clutter. People in our studies often tell me that they have held onto something out of a sense of responsibility, either for the item itself or to the environment.

"I need it to go to a good home" and "my grandmother gave this to me" are sentiments we commonly hear. Thus, people may keep things not out of fear of losing them but because saving them is consistent with their values.

Leaning into values

In a 2024 study, my team demonstrated that taking a values-based approach to decluttering helps older adults to decrease household clutter and increases their positive affect, a state of mind characterized by feelings such as joy and contentment. Clinicians visited the homes of older adults with hoarding disorder for one hour per week for six weeks. At each visit, the clinicians used a technique called motivational interviewing to help participants talk through their decisions while they sorted household clutter.

We found that having participants start with identifying their values allowed them to maintain focus on their long-term goals. Too often, people focus on the immediate ability of an object to "spark joy" and forget to consider whether an object has greater meaning and purpose. Values are the abstract beliefs that we humans use to create our goals. Values are whatever drives us and can include family, faith or frivolity.

Because values are subjective, what people identify as important to keep is also subjective. For example, the dress I wore to my sister's wedding reminded me of a wonderful day. However, when it no longer fit I gave it away because doing so was more consistent with my values of utility and helpfulness: I wanted the dress to go to someone who needed it and would use it. Someone who more strongly valued family and beauty might have prioritized keeping the dress because of the aesthetics and its link to a family event.

Additionally, we found that instead of challenging the reasons a person might have for keeping an item, it is helpful to instead focus on eliciting their reasons for discarding it and the goals they have for their home and their life.

Tips for sweeping away the old

My research on using motivational interviewing for decluttering and my observations from a current clinical trial on the approach point to some practical steps people can take to declutter their home. Although my work has been primarily with older adults, these tips should be helpful for people of all ages.

Start with writing out your values. Every object in your home should feel value-consistent for you. For example, if tradition and faith are important values for you, you might be more inclined to hold onto a cookbook that was made by the elders at your church and more able to let go of a cookbook you picked up on a whim at a bookstore.

If, instead, health and creativity are your core values, it might be more important to hold onto a cookbook of novel ways to sneak more vegetables into your diet.

Defining value-consistent goals for using your space can help to maintain motivation as you declutter. Are you clearing off your desk so you can work more efficiently? Making space on kitchen counters to bake cookies with your grandchildren?

Remember that sometimes your values will conflict. At those moments, it may help to reflect on whether keeping or discarding an object will bring you closer to your goals for the space.

Similarly, remember that values are subjective. If you are helping a loved one declutter, maintain a curious, nonjudgmental attitude. Where you might see a box filled with junk, your grandmother might see something filled with "toothpick holders and other treasures."

(Mary E Dozier, Mississippi State University, The Conversation)

All you need to know about...

Potassium-enriched salt

Reduces risk of stroke
Potassium supplements in salt can significantly reduce the risks of stroke recurrence as well as death, according to an international study.
The study comes amidst the new recommendation by the World Health Organization (WHO) to take potassium-enriched salt to combat hypertension and related heart risks.

Risk factors
Stroke is a leading cause of death and disability, and recurrent events remain a major concern. High sodium intake and low potassium intake are considered key risk factors.
"The study suggests that potassium salt substitute significantly reduced the risks of stroke recurrence and death, and is a novel and practical therapeutic option for patients with stroke," said the researchers, including from China, Australia, and the UK.

The study
The randomised clinical trial involved 15,249 participants from China who had previously reported suffering from a stroke.
The participants were assigned to use either a salt substitute, consisting of 75 per cent sodium chloride and 25 per cent potassium chloride by mass, or regular salt.
The findings, published in JAMA Cardiology, showed that recurrent stroke was reduced by 14 per cent in the potassium substitute group compared with those in the regular salt group.
A total of 2,735 recurrent stroke events occurred, with 691 fatal and 2,044 nonfatal episodes.

K-salt
The WHO, in its recent guideline, suggests using K-salt or potassium chloride instead of regular table salt, which is rich in sodium. The K-salt may help reduce the risk of hypertension, which can lead to cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) and chronic kidney disease, by lowering blood pressure.
It also lowers the risks of other conditions associated with high sodium intake, such as gastric cancer. —IANS

Hairstyle more precious than head?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

or concerns about ruining their hairstyle. Lastly, individuals traveling within their neighbourhoods for short distances believe helmets are unnecessary. "When we question them, they casually respond, 'This is our area, we live nearby'. But safety should never be compromised, regardless of distance. People take the time to dress neatly and completely before stepping out of their homes, but when it comes to riding a vehicle, the same sense of uniformity and preparedness is often ignored," an official added.

As per the Motor Vehicle Act, it is a violation for a pillion rider to travel without a helmet. Section 129 mandates that both the rider and the pillion passenger on a two-wheeler must wear helmets, and failure to comply can result in a fine for the rider. The law applies to all individuals above the age of four, making helmets mandatory for both the rider and the pillion passenger. If a pillion rider is found without a helmet, the rider will be held accountable and fined accordingly.

Helmetless pillion riders are just as vulnerable to head injuries in road accidents as the rider. A traffic expert pointed out that a large proportion of road fatalities involve pillion riders who were not wearing helmets.

"A fall at even moderate speed can lead to severe head trauma, and the lack of compliance among pillion riders is a serious safety issue," traffic officials said.

Traffic police have intensified their enforcement of helmet laws for both riders and pillion riders. Several awareness drives have been conducted, including campaigns in schools, colleges, urging the importance of helmet safety for all two-wheeler occupants. "Fines for not wearing helmets will continue to be imposed strictly. Riders must also take responsibility and ensure their co-riders wear helmets," traffic officials added.

As Bengaluru continues to curb road fatalities, the focus now shifts to ensuring that every person on a two-wheeler—whether rider or pillion—recognises the importance of helmet safety. DCP South Traffic Shiva Prakash Devaraju said, "We cannot definitively say whether the numbers have increased or decreased, but enforcement has certainly intensified. It is a common practice for parents to purchase helmets only for the rider, often neglecting one for the child. In some cases, even the rider does not wear a helmet. Approximately 5% to 10% of fatalities involve individuals without helmets."

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CHANGE OF NAME

Change Of Name

I, Usha Badrinath Racharla aged 40 years have changed my name to Usha Racharla R/o C1602, Mahindra Windchimes, Arekere, Bangalore 560076 vide Affidavit dated 27.01.2025 before Jain Swarnamala, Notary Public/Bangalore.

I, Sudhir Kumar Goyal Narayan Prasad, C/o N P Goyal, No.71 Krishna Kuteer G F A & B, South Cross road, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru-560004, have changed my name to Narayan Sudhir Kumar Goyal, affidavit dt: 12.02.2025 Notary KV Mani, B.lore.

I, THILAK VARMA S/O ANAND K , R/O KOTHANUR MAIN, BANGALORE, KARNATAKA - 560077 Have changed my Religion HINDUISM to ISLAM Religion, also changed my name to MOHAMMAD UMER for all future purposes.

I, Tejashwini Sankuratri W/o Chandan Kumar.R.V R/O 6-1-1753/4A,Chidannanda Gouda Hospital Rd,Twins Building, Sharanabasaveshwara Colony,Sindhnur,Raichur 584128 have changed my name to Tejashwini Ravulapalli .

I, Shakunthala Lakshmi Narayana Reddy W/o Lakshmi Narayana Reddy Residing At, No 407, 23rd Cross,10th Main, HSR Layout, Sector 7, Bengaluru 560102, have changed my name to Shakunthala for all purposes.

I, Siddesh Hedni Vishwanath s/o Vishwanath Hedni Gurupadappa, R/o No 56 17th G Cross Rose Garden Road JP Nagar 5th Phase B'luru-560078 have changed my name to Siddesh Hedni for all Purposes.

I Karthatu Raghuveer Pai S/O, Vishwanath Pai R/o 10th Cross Muthurayaswamy Layout Hulimavu Lake Road Hulimavu Bannerghatta Road - 560076 have changed my name to Raghuveer Pai

I, Nirenjan Kumar Shivanna S/o Dr. L Shivanna R/o #8 5th Cross Rd, Gopalappa layout B'lore-560032 have changed my name to Niranjan Kumar S.

I Subbulakshmi Nagaraj W/O, Nagaraja H R/o B 1006, Shriram Symphonye, Kkr Road, Mallasandra, Doddakallasandra,bangalore 560062 have changed my name to Subbulakshmi.

I, Shaminder Kour Raina, D/o Jang Bhadur Singh, R/o Lake view Apartments, #72, 7th floor, Gangadhar Chetty road, Ulsoor, Bangalore - 560042, have changed my name to Shaminder Kour as per affidavit dated 26/12/2024 sworn before Notary A. S. Narayana Reddy.

I, LAVINA THARAKAN FRANCIS, R/at No.07, 1st Main road, 7th Cross, Kempaiah Nagara, Chikkabanavara Post, Huralichikkanahalli, Bengaluru-560090, have changed my name to LAVINA JERRY, vide affidavit dt: 03.02.2025 before notary V. Anjanappa, B.lore

I Harry Thomas Premnathan s/o Joseph I M R/o 7, Ramchandrappa Lyt, Kariyammana palya, Lingrajapura, B'luru 560084 have changed my name to Harry Thomas Prem Affidavit Dt.11/02/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I Varsha Bahadurdesai, W/o, Sudhir Kumar Kale, residing At, 9064, prestige Wellington Park, Gangamma Circle, jalahalli, Bengaluru 560013. have changed my minor daughter name Shreya Kale to Shreya Sudhir Kale for all purposes.

LOST & FOUND

I, SAINATH KUMAR R, residing at No. 14, 17th 'A' Cross; 4th Stage, 4th Block, Basaveshwaranagar, Bangalore - 560 079, have lost My Diploma Certificate Year 1985. Regn. No. 432981, Karnataka Technical Examination Board. Lost report No. 1463426/2025. If found contact 9886371998

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DRDO showcases AMCA and advanced defence technologies at Aero India

During Aero India, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) showcased a full-scale model of India's first 5.5 Gen stealth aircraft, the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA). Along with this, 16 other DRDO-developed products and technologies were displayed, including the Twin Engine Deck Based Fighter (TEDBF), LCA Mk-2 Model, Air Droppable Container (ADC)-150, Advanced LightWeight Torpedo, Kaveri Derivative Aero Engine without afterburner, Naval Anti-ship Missile - Medium Range, and various other missile systems.

The outdoor segment of the DRDO pavilion demonstrated the application of defence technologies, featuring a full-scale model of the QRSAM Mobile Launcher Vehicle, Akash NG Launcher, Archer UAV 1:1 (Rustom-1), Air Droppable Survival and Rescue Kit (SARK), Emergency Escape Parachute System for Air Crew (EEPSA), Military Combat Parachute System (MCPS), Vehicle Mounted Jammer, Anti UAV (JAU) Entity of Project DHARASHAKTI, and VHF Radar. A key highlight was the demonstration of the Dornier aircraft's midlife upgrade, showcasing enhanced avionics, improved fuel efficiency, radar systems, manoeuvrability, integrated surveillance, and electronic warfare capabilities. —BMB

Whodunnit game beings over Metro fare hike

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BJP leaders stage a protest against the Metro fare hike on Monday

The recent fare hike by the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has triggered a strong backlash from commuters, sparking a political blame game between the BJP and Congress. Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya took the issue to Lok Sabha, criticising the increase and highlighting its impact on short-distance commuters. He claimed that the hike had led to a 100% increase in fares across several metro stations, making Bengaluru Metro the most expensive metro network in the country. He argued that this defeats the very purpose of creating a sustainable public transport solution for Bengaluru and urged authorities to review the anomalies in the fare structure and rationalise ticket prices to make them more affordable for the common man.

Countering these claims, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah took to X to present what he called "key facts" regarding the fare hike. He accused BJP leaders of spreading false and misleading information to shift the blame onto the Karnataka Government. He pointed out that the same BJP leaders who take credit for the Bengaluru Metro's expansion as the Centre's achievement are now blaming the state government for the fare hike, calling it an act of hypocrisy and self-deception.

Explaining the structure of BMRCL, Siddaramaiah stated that it is a joint venture between the Union and Karnataka Governments, with equal (50:50) partnership. The current chairman of BMRCL is also the Union Secretary for Housing and Urban Affairs, and both Union and State Government officials serve on the BMRCL board. He emphasised that BMRCL is an autonomous body, meaning the Karnataka Government does not have full control over its decisions. Like all metro corporations in the country, BMRCL operates under the Metro Railways (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2002, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Union Government.

> **Hike had led to a 100% increase in fares at stations, making Bengaluru Metro the most expensive metro network in the country**
> –Tejasvi Surya, MP

Addressing the decision-making process behind the fare hike, Siddaramaiah stated that metro fares had not been revised since 2017. He revealed that BMRCL itself had written to the Union Government requesting a fare revision. If the Karnataka Government had the authority to determine metro fares, he questioned why BMRCL had approached the Centre instead.

Comparing metro fare structures across cities, Siddaramaiah noted that Bengaluru Metro's revised fares range from Rs 10 to Rs 60, whereas Mumbai Metro charges between Rs 10 and Rs 80. He clarified that while initial phase fares were determined by respective state metro corporations, subsequent revisions are now handled by a committee appointed by the Union Government.

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Near Lalbagh Metro Station

All are welcome

Students get peek into Ellie's world

On Tuesday, students at a city-based school experienced a unique visit from Ellie, a lifelike mechanical elephant. Ellie captivated hundreds of students, mimicking the movements of a real elephant by blinking her eyes and flapping her ears. She also narrated a story detailing her life's journey. Ellie was part of an empathy-building tour initiated by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) at St Joseph's School.

"This experience has enlightened them about the significance of animal welfare and the harsh realities faced by elephants in captivity," said Rev. Fr. Rohan D'Almeida, SJ, principal, St Joseph's School. Captive elephants used for entertainment are often separated from their families and natural habitats. They endure harsh training methods and are controlled with ankuses, and heavy batons tipped with sharp steel points, which instill fear and pain. "Over time, many elephants exhibit abnormal behaviors due to prolonged confinement," said Meenakshi Narang of PETA. —BMB

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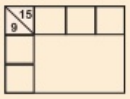
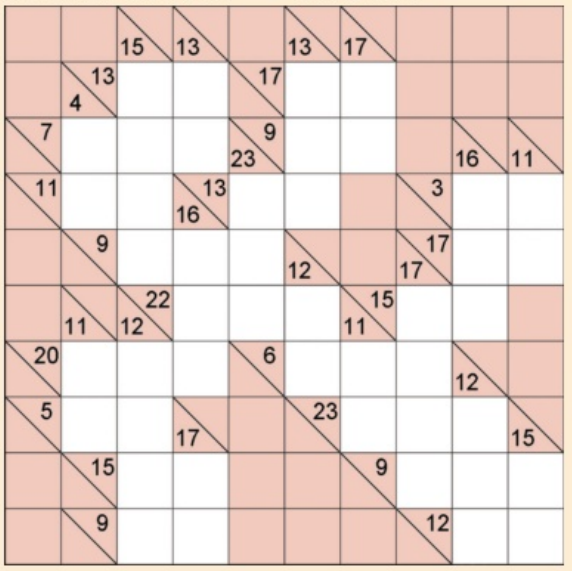
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

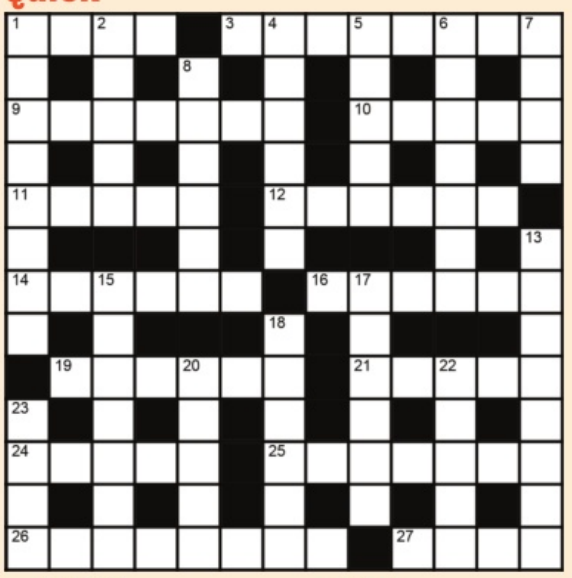


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Lacklustre (4)
3 Embarrassed (3-5)
9 A narrow waterway (7)
10 Shrill tone (5)
11 Item in a log (5)
12 Doing some undercover work (6)
14 Passed through a sieve (6)
16 Caught a glimpse of (6)
19 Karnataka's royal city (6)
21 Extemporize (2-3)
24 Provincial capital on the Nile (5)
25 Heathen (7)
26 Dawn or sunrise (8)
27 Not as much as before (4)

DOWN

1 Lessen (8)
2 Jumped or sprang forcefully (5)
4 Sign up; enrol (6)
5 It will be your transport in crossing the river (5)
6 Madras city as it is now called (7)
7 Indian oil lamp (4)
8 Protein catalyst of a specific biochemic reaction (6)
13 Eccentric persons, geeks? (8)
15 Take wing and abscond? (3,4)
17 Sticks or poles used for walking (6)
18 Italy's football league (5,1)
20 Proprietor (5)
22 Shelf; ridge of rocks (5)
23 Praise (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: X EQUALS G

UVFDRNLX JFVRNZE FDYC DLU FQFVM ALF AG TE ZA HF KTNFZPM DLU EDGFPM NLEDLF FQFVM LNXCZ AG ATV PNQFE.

Linemaro

Do you remember me? Oh I forgot, we've met only in my dreams

Mindchow

It's not enough to be busy. So are ants. The question is, what are we busy about

Joke of the day

That moment as a parent, when you realise your child has left the room and you've just been sitting there alone, watching Sesame Street ...for the last 15 minutes

Loop

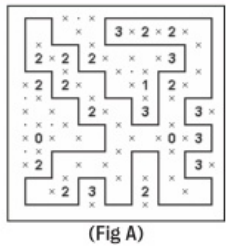
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

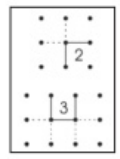
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

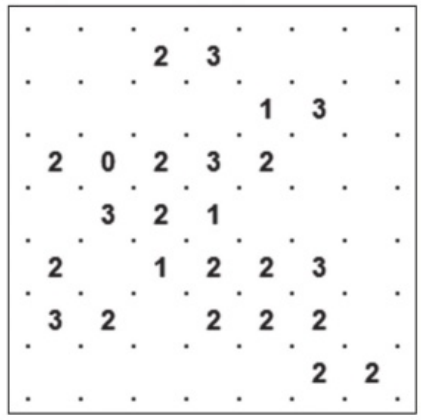
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



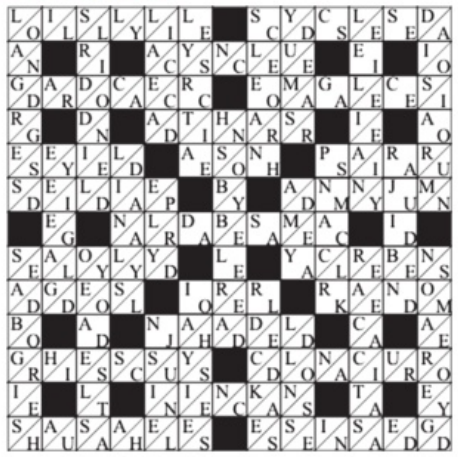
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



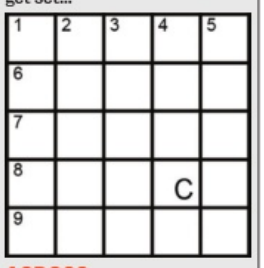
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

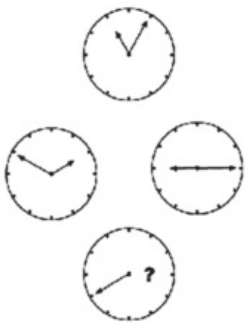
1 Paste; 6 Ma has; 7 Dense; 8 Cede I (2-3); 9 Oscar

DOWN

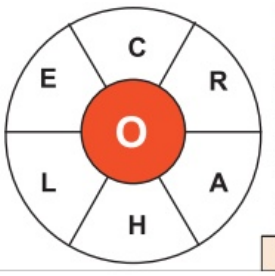
1 Dados; 2 Me ere; 3 In Cap; 4 Cheat; 5 SS Sea

Mensapuzzle

Where should the hour hand point to on the bottom clock?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

15 Average; 17 Good; 19 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	5	6				8	4	
7				8				6
		4	2		3	5		
9			7		8			1
			6		1			
4			3		2			5
		7	8		5	9		
6				2				8
	4	5				1	2	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 5
3 6 7 9

Medium = 8
2 5 6 9

Hard = 3
2 2 3 2

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

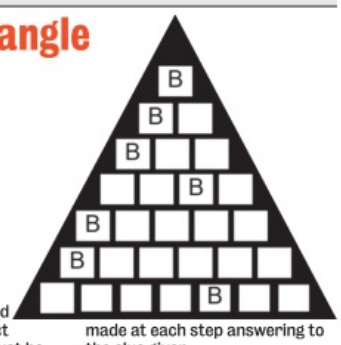
Differences: 1. Slipper is different. 2. Pipe under sink is different. 3. Faucet handle is different. 4. Door handle is different. 5. Hair is different. 6. Arm is longer.

Riddler

Using all the digits from 1 to 7, what two numbers have the largest product? For example, 1234 x 567 = 699678 but you can do much better than that.

Alpha triangle

1 Second grade
2 To exist
3 Place to sleep
4 Ball girls?
5 Portends
6 Physiques
7 Refuse to follow



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

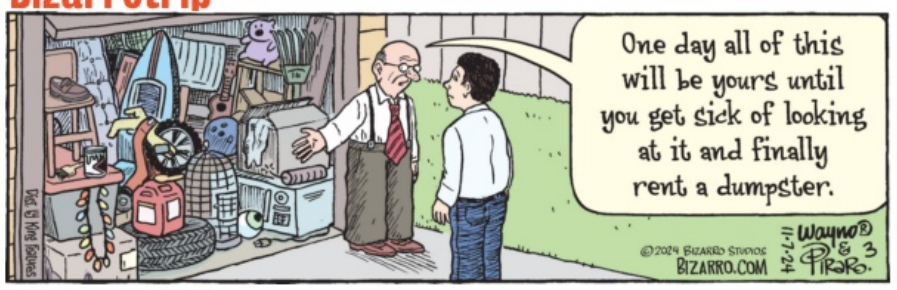
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye

IS YOU SURE YOU AIN'T BUNNY'S PATER?
OF COURSE NOT!!
popeye.com
MY MS. BUNNY BANK IS SAFE IN THE SHELTER OF THE WORLD OF CULTURE!
5-17
OH, HORROR! MY SEARCH FOR PATER HAS BEEN INTERRUPTED BY ANOTHER TWIST OF FICKLE FATE!!
A FOUL VULTURE IS ABOUT TO DINE WITH ME!

Bizarrotrip


One day all of this will be yours until you get sick of looking at it and finally rent a dumpster.
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11-7-24
Wayno & PIRRO 3

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

AUDITIONS START AT 4 P.M. DETENTION IS FROM 3 – 4:30 P.M. SO I NEED TO GET OUT OF DETENTION BY 4 P.M.
AND I'M GOING TO NEED ALL OF YOUR HELP.
EVEN THOUGH YOU DESERVED DETENTION, I CAN'T SAY NO TO A JAILBREAK.
YOU BETTER PROMISE THIS DOESN'T LAND ME IN DETENTION, TOO.
GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY
I HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO DO.
LET THE GAMES BEGIN.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2020 JAKSMYR MICHAEL

Crankshaft

DESPITE THE FACT THAT WE'VE ADVERTISED EVERYWHERE...
WE'RE STILL HAVING PROBLEMS ATTRACTING NEW SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS.
WOW! THAT'S REALLY HARD TO BELIEVE... A GLAMOUR JOB LIKE THIS!
BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books
11-7

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you may be occupied with your children's education and planning for their higher studies. Couples might receive good news regarding children. You may consider upskilling or pursuing higher education for career advancement. Singles could meet their soulmate. Those in education, consulting, and banking will have a productive day.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
You may feel dissatisfied and struggle to manage responsibilities. Investments might lead to some losses, so review documents carefully before signing. A family elder's health may concern you. If you're planning home renovations, it's best to postpone them for now

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
A busy day at work awaits, with networking bringing significant business opportunities. Innovation in partnerships may lead to financial growth. Investments in business may yield future profits. Your emotional connection with your spouse will strengthen, enhancing your relationship.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
You will enjoy quality time with family and friends, bringing happiness and emotional fulfilment. New sources of income may improve financial stability, while controlled spending helps secure your finances. You may purchase valuable items that elevate your social status.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Elders' blessings will guide you, helping you regain patience and focus. Achieving your goals becomes easier, and you will perform well in both business and family life. A balance between expenses and savings will improve financial security.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Dissatisfaction and laziness may slow down your progress, causing delays in work or projects. Lovebirds should postpone major decisions about marriage. Job seekers may face disappointment in interviews. Stay patient and persistent.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Your confidence will be high, leading to short-term financial gains from investments. Positive interactions with your boss may result in promotions and increased social recognition. Work-related travel opportunities may arise, benefiting your career.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
The Moon's blessings bring professional success and recognition for your hard work. Improved work efficiency boosts confidence, and meeting an influential person may provide valuable guidance. Parents' health concerns will ease, bringing peace of mind.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Happiness and positivity surround you today. A visit to a religious place may provide inner strength, and charitable donations may bring fulfilment. Overseas travel related to education or work is possible. Singles may find a suitable match.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
A sense of unhappiness may affect your productivity, causing delays in projects. Keeping professional and personal life separate will maintain harmony at home. Avoid adventure trips or reckless driving. Lovebirds may face relationship challenges, and job seekers may experience setbacks.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Positive energy surrounds you, bringing a sense of control over your life. Business partnerships and long-distance travel may be on the horizon. Strengthening trust with your spouse will enhance harmony in your domestic life.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
You will excel at work, strengthening your bond with your boss and possibly gaining new responsibilities or promotions. Chronic health issues may improve. Financial incentives and recognition are likely. Disputes with siblings may be resolved, and job seekers may find new opportunities.

KIDZONE

Dharthi, Bengaluru

Sanjanna, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
56×(⅘ / ⅗) = 56×⅘ = 28

RIDDLER
742 x 6531 = 4,846,002. The numbers with the smallest difference produce the largest product. You start out with the highest two digits, 7 and 6, then attach 5 and 4, putting the smaller of the two digits with the larger number, giving you 74 and 65. The next two highest digits are 3 and 2, giving you 742 and 653. Finally, you add the 1 to the lower number.

QUOTE UNCODE
Dreaming permits each and every one of us to be quietly and safely insane every night of our lives.

FAST FIVE

S	E	P	T	A
A	M	A	H	S
D	E	N	E	S
D	E	I	C	E
O	R	C	A	S

STRIKE OUT

S	A	S	H	E	S	S	E	N	S
E	L	N	I	C	K	S	T	E	
B	D	J	A	D	E	D	A	A	
A	D	O	S	O	E	R	K	E	N
S	L	Y	L	L	A	C	R	E	S
E	A	L	A	B	A	M	A	D	
D	I	L	I	P	B	A	N	N	U
G	N	D	I	N	A	R	I	A	
E	Y	E	D	E	O	N	S	A	R
G	R	O	C	E	R	E	A	G	L
L	I	L	L	I	E	C	Y	C	L

QUICK

D	U	L	L	R	E	D	F	A	C
E	E	E	N	E	H	I			
C	H	A	N	N	E	L	R	E	E
R	P	Z	I	R	N				
E	N	T	R	Y	S	P	Y	I	N
A	M	T	A						
I	S	L	E	T	E	D	E	S	P
E	L	S	T	D					
M	Y	S	O	R	E	A	D	L	I
L	A	W	R	F	E	A			
A	S	W	A	N	I	N	F	I	D
U	A	E	S	I	G	L			

BULL'S EYE
ALOE, CAROL, CHOLERA, CHORALE, chore, coal, coral, core, echo, halo, hero, hole, loch, lore, ochre, oracle, oral, roach, role

MENSA PUZZLE
The hour hand points to the 4. The sum of the values pointed to by the hands on each clock equals 12.

SUDOKU

2	5	6	1	7	9	8	4	3
7	9	3	5	8	4	2	1	6
1	8	4	2	6	3	5	7	9
9	6	2	7	5	8	4	3	1
5	3	8	6	4	1	7	9	2
4	7	1	3	9	2	6	8	5
3	2	7	8	1	5	9	6	4
6	1	9	4	2	7	3	5	8
8	4	5	9	3	6	1	2	7

ALPHA TRIANGLE
8, 8e, 8ed, 8obs, 8odes, 8odies, Disobey.

GO FIGURE
Easy
9 + 6 – 7 – 3 = 5
Medium
9 + 6 – 5 – 2 = 8
Hard
2 × 2 – 3 + 2 = 3

LOOP

KAKURO

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Academy Awards
The Academy Awards will be held on Sunday, March 2, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles and presenters will include Halle Berry and Emma Stone

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Wednesday, February 12, 2025
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Entertainment Industry Promotion

That's a red flag

Sanya reveals some issues she would not put up with in relationships

Actor Sanya Malhotra, who is garnering rave reviews for her latest release "Mrs", says while relationships demand numerous compromises, there are certain "red flags" such as disrespect and gaslighting that she would never overlook.

"Mrs" stars Malhotra as Richa, an aspiring dancer who is married off in a patriarchal family where she is reduced to doing household chores but ultimately resists her oppression.

Directed by Arati Kadav of "Cargo" fame and adapted from the hit Malayalam film "The Great Indian Kitchen", the movie is streaming on ZEE5.

The actor, also known for films like "Dangal", "Pagglait", and "Kathal - A Jackfruit Mystery", said she has great men like her brother-in-law and friends around her.

"A relationship requires many compromises... There are major red flags which I will avoid like having no respect at all and if somebody is constantly gaslighting me, then no, or someone who's not ready to listen. These are my major red flags," Malhotra told PTI in an interview here.

Easy communication is a "green flag" for her, she said.

"... When I'm able to communicate any thought that comes up in my head... It shouldn't be like I'm not comfortable talking to my partner about this. An easy, free flowing communication is a green flag. I like to communicate, I love talking... I can talk about my emotions, my career all the time," she added.

—PTI

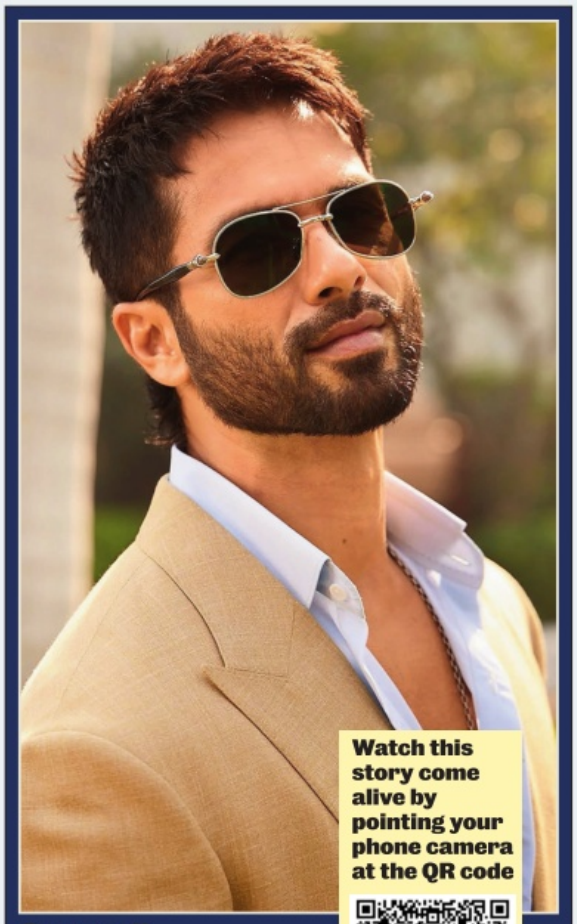
Cryptic messaging?

Samantha Ruth Prabhu is known for sharing details about her personal and professional life with her fans and followers on social media. Her recent Instagram story sparked concern among fans, as they believe it is a response to her ex-husband Naga Chaitanya's statement about their divorce and his current wife, Sobhita Dhulipala.

Samantha shared a quote by spiritual guru Sadhguru, which reads, "As a human, you are not a being. You are a becoming, an ongoing process. Nothing is fixed – you can be whichever way you want to be."

In a recent interview on the Raw Talks With VK podcast, Naga Chaitanya addressed his divorce from Samantha and questioned why people consider him a criminal for it. He shared that they have both moved on with their lives, and he has found love in Sobhita while still holding great respect for his previous marriage. In the same conversation, he expressed disappointment over people cursing his wife, actress Sobhita Dhulipala, assuming that she was responsible for his divorce from Samantha. He said that his bond with Sobhita developed very organically after his divorce.

— ETimes



Watch this story come alive by pointing your phone camera at the QR code

Rugged!
Shahid Kapoor manages the rugged look even if he is dressed in a suit. Don't believe us? Then check it out

Powerful statement about courage

Actor Ali Fazal, whose upcoming film Rule Breakers is slated to release in the US ahead of International Women's Day on March 7, said that the movie is a powerful statement about courage, unity, and impact of education.

The actor has shared a glimpse from the first look of his character. Ali will be seen playing Samir Sinha, a techie from Los Angeles.

Sharing his excitement, Ali said, "This film is a gem, and I couldn't be prouder to be a part of it. Rule Breakers is not just a story; it's a powerful statement about courage, unity, and the impact of education."

"Releasing it on the eve of Women's Day in the US makes it even more special because it aligns with the global celebration of women's strength and resilience. I can't wait for audiences to witness this journey on the big screen," he added.

A gripping, women-centric drama, "Rule Breakers" tells the story of a visionary woman who dares to educate young girls in a society where such efforts are seen as an act of rebellion. As their innovation captures global attention, their success becomes both a beacon of hope and a source of conflict.

"Rule Breakers" is set to be a significant addition to Ali Fazal's diverse filmography which also stars the iconic Phoebe Waller Bridge and is helmed by the Oscar winning filmmaker, Bill Guttentag.

Ali has his dates full in 2025 with projects in Bollywood, OTT Hollywood and his debut down south.

He had earlier shared that 2025 feels like a culmination of years of hard work and passion for storytelling.

—IANS

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Trailer unveiled

Gurunandan-starrer Raju James Bond is set to release on February 14. Roaring Star Srimurali unveiled the trailer of the film recently. "Gurunandan is our family friend. The song and trailer of the movie have turned out well. The performances of the hero and the heroine are good," Srimurali said.

Manjunath Vishwakarma and Kiran Bharthur have bankrolled the movie while Deepak Madhuvanahalli has directed it.

"I worked for the Srimurali-starrer Minchina Ota that was released 17 years ago. I am very happy to have Srimurali as the chief guest for this function. The movie has the potential to entertain audiences," said Madhuvanahalli.

Gurunandan said he is a fan of Dr Rajkumar and Puneeth Rajkumar. "I play a different role in this movie," said Gurunandan.

On the occasion, producer Manjunath Vishwakarma said Raju James Bond belongs to the comedy genre.

Uncle's blessings

Vijay Kumar aka Duniya Vijay unveiled his nephew Yogesh aka Loose Mada's movie song – Churu Muri on Sunday. Yogesh has played the lead in Sidlingu 2 that is set to arrive in theatres on February 14. The movie is a sequel to Sidlingu that was released 12 years ago. Sidlingu 2 is directed by Vijaya Prasad.

Duniya Vijay recalled how Vijaya Prasad encouraged him by giving him small character roles in tele serials. "Vijaya Prasad directed the serial Silli Lalli that became the talk of the town. Now, he has directed Sidlingu 2. I thank the director for writing the script for Yogesh. I want the director to write the script for Sidlingu 3 too," Vijay said.

Vijay said he is a big fan of Yogesh as he accepts roles of all types of characters. "I know Yogesh's potential. I wish him success by acting in good movies," he said. Thanking Vijay for gracing the function, Yogesh announced that he would call him uncle from now on. "I used to call him uncle as a child but he insisted I call him Kumara. For the first time, I have called him uncle on this stage. I will continue to call him uncle," said Yogesh.